



MAYOR & COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

DATE: 2/16/16

ITEM 19

MOTION

AGENDA ITEM: Single Fire Station Concept

SUBMITTED BY: Greg Malmquist, Fire Chief

THROUGH: Public Safety Committee

REVIEWED BY: Interim Administrator

SUGGESTED ORDER OF BUSINESS:

- Introduction of Item City Administrator
- Report/Presentation..... Fire Chief
- Questions from Council to Staff Mayor Facilitates
- Call for Motion Mayor & City Council
- Discussion Mayor & City Council
- Action on Motion..... Mayor Facilitates

POLICY RECCOMENDER: Fire Department/Public Safety Committee

FISCAL IMPACT: The possible purchase of land for one future fire station

SUMMARY AND ACTION REQUESTED: Staff is requesting direction from council regarding the concept of a single fire station for Lake Elmo.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY: At the October 13, 2015 Council Workshop, a presentation on “Public Safety, Staffing and Facilities” was given. The information presented was the result of extensive research and discussion conducted by the Public Safety Committee and the officers of the fire department. The information focused on identifying future staffing, equipment and facility needs for the fire department, (see attachment). The Public Safety Committee was looking for direction from Council for future planning, with the question of following the current Paid on Call (POC), multiple stations model or moving toward a one station with 24/7 staffing needing additional clarification.

Information presented addressed the results of the 2004 and 2011 fire studies which were both based on POC staffing. Studies concluded current stations should be relocated and “Are not adaptable to future expansion”. Analysis of various options and how other communities have addressed this issue.

I would also like to highlight the recruitment efforts pursued over the years to deal with our inability to fully staff. The Public Safety Committee spent considerable time brainstorming and addressing this national/regional/local issue and came up with a pretty thorough list, (see attached). In addition to following up on these recommendations, FD staff went even further by attending training at regional and national levels and networking with local FD’s, yet we continue to have a very low success rate.

At the conclusion of the presentation, Council requested additional information/numbers related to the comparison of 1 vs 2 stations. Chief Malmquist conducted additional research, met with Eagan Fire Chief Mike Scott and had follow up conversation with Chief Officers of Maplewood FD regarding closing of fire stations and operating costs. See attached spreadsheet. Finance Director Cathy Bendel provided the operating cost information on the comparison spreadsheet.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION (SWOT):

Strengths	Ensure adequate staffing, long range cost savings (potentially over \$3mil.), meet future response needs of community.
Weaknesses	Increasing land costs. Initial investment in facility. Delaying decision until FD reaches critical staffing point and delivery of service is impacted.
Opportunities	Identify and secure site while still available. Learn from other communities. Possibly partner with Washington County Sheriff’s Department and Lakeview EMS in combined Public Safety Facility.
Threats	Inability to staff by committing to failing Paid on Call system.

RECOMMENDATION: The Public Safety Committee and the Officers of the Lake Elmo Fire Department make the following recommendation.”

“Move to make preparations to move to a single fire station and identify an appropriate site.

ATTACHMENTS: